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**National Information Technology Center**

# **Strategic Plan**

**1998 - 2002**

**Version 1.4 — December 1998**

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# The Strategic Planning Team



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# Executive Summary

The document describes the plans of the USDA National Information Technology Center for 1999 - 2003. NITC Strategic and Tactical planning was conducted by the NITC Strategic Planning Team, consisting of first-line supervisors and staff, with the participation and review of most NITC personnel.

NITC is operating in an environment in which only the best Information Technology (IT) organizations will survive and prosper. USDA and other Federal agencies are faced with budget and staff cuts, and are under tremendous pressure to do more with fewer resources. Data center consolidation and franchising initiatives have triggered intense competition between Federal IT organizations. Surviving organizations will be those which focus on controlling costs, increasing economies of scale, and delivering superior services to their customers.

In the last five years, NITC has greatly increased the services it provides its customers. Among the new and improved services are:

- Y2K forward date test environment,
- Enhanced and more cost-effective Electronic Data Interchange services,
- Web access to mainframe databases and applications,
- Web applications development support,
- Management of mid-range servers.

NITC describes its plans for the next five years by defining Strategic Objectives and Tactical Initiatives. *Strategic Objectives* are the highest level descriptions of what must be done from 1999 through 2003. To accomplish those objectives, NITC has also defined *Tactical Initiatives*, which are specific activities to be carried out in FY 1999. A summary of Strategic Objectives is presented below. A summary of Tactical Initiatives follows.

1999 - 2003 Strategic Objectives	Description
<p><b>Strategic Objective A: Support the USDA Information Systems Technology Architecture (ISTA)</b></p>	<p>The USDA ISTA is a blueprint for the USDA computing and telecommunications environment. NITC has a significant role in the operation and maintenance of the existing USDA architecture, and is committed to providing an open environment that will facilitate the transition to the future environment. NITC will develop and offer the expertise necessary to assist the OCIO in migrating the USDA to the new architecture. Every organizational unit of NITC will play a key role in migrating from the current to the future Information Systems Technology Architecture.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Objective B: Market NITC</b></p>	<p>NITC is committed to continuing to reduce its costs even as it improves services. To do this requires continual growth. To continue to attract new customers and increase services to existing customers requires marketing. An area of particular emphasis will be educating NITC customers and prospective customers on new services - especially those of great interest and demand - such as Web access to the mainframe.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Objective C: Maximize the Performance of Legacy Environments</b></p>	<p>NITC has a successful history of providing mainframe services to the USDA and other federal agencies. NITC must continue to maximize the return on USDA's investment by supporting the fundamental needs of existing clients, while moving toward the information technology architectures of the future. This will be accomplished by modernizing and developing of legacy environments.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Objective D: Control and Reduce Costs</b></p>	<p>NITC has a long and successful history of meeting customer requirements at an ever-decreasing cost. Increased Federal emphasis on ensuring government services are provided at the lowest cost provide NITC with a potential competitive advantage, as well as a challenge - keep improving services while reducing costs.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Objective E: Improve Customer Service Quality</b></p>	<p>We must make our commitment to customers highly visible through an aggressive approach to problem resolution, improved technical communications, a centralized help desk (customer service center), and the development of good customer service skills. Those capabilities must be evident in all staff, including clerical, administrative, and operations personnel.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Objective F: Develop New Services and Increase Customer Base for Existing Services</b></p>	<p>To grow and remain viable, NITC must both anticipate and respond to the evolving needs of its customers and position itself to assist USDA agencies that are not currently customers, but could benefit from NITC services. Developing and offering new services, identifying potential new customers, and helping solve their business problems will help us expand our customer base.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Objective G: Prepare the Workforce to Meet Future Challenges</b></p>	<p>NITC must increase its ability to respond to changes in business, in its customer base, and in technology, and to create the environment necessary to improve productivity and support new business initiatives. The NITC organization and work force must be dynamic, flexible and proactive in order to meet future challenges and respond to continuous, rapid change.</p>

The most critical activities which NITC must undertake in FY 1999 are described in the following Tactical Initiatives:

FY 1999 Tactical Initiatives	Description
<b>Provide Open Systems Computing Environment</b>	Install and implement OS/390, the mainframe Open Systems operating system, which includes UNIX Services and an integrated Web server.
<b>Provide Web Access to the NITC Computing Environment</b>	Provide multiple tools that allow customers to access their applications and databases through the Web.
<b>Develop Applications Performance Tuning Service</b>	Develop services to help NITC customers improve the efficiency of their applications and databases, and reduce their computing costs.
<b>Year 2000 Compliance</b>	Implement a Year 2000 operating environment with OS/390 as the base operating system, make all NITC-developed tools and applications Year 2000 capable, make all NITC commercial off-the-shelf software Year 2000 compliant, provide customers with information and advice on using available conversion tools, implement a Y2K forward date test environment, and implement a Year 2000 capable production environment. Develop a Business Continuity and Contingency Plan covering all critical services and systems.
<b>FAA Year 2000 Compliance</b>	Meet FAA requirements for Year 2000 compliance, including development of a Y2K forward date test environment on the FAA mainframe, migration from the MVS operating system to the Y2K complaint OS/390 operating system, and upgrade of all commercial off-the-shelf software products to Y2K complaint versions.
<b>Improve Customer Service Quality</b>	Improve customer relations, the problem and change management process, and move the Customer Handbook to the Web.
<b>Develop NITC Resource Tracking System</b>	To meet business needs and emerging financial management requirements, implement an activity based costing system.
<b>Define New Business Development Process</b>	Define a new service development and implementation process, new marketing strategies and streamlined pricing methodologies.
<b>Update and Expand NITC Web Site</b>	Continue to add information and customer services to the NITC Web Site.
<b>Refine and Document Systems Development Life Cycle</b>	Document and improve the process by which NITC applications development and data center staff deliver services to our customers.
<b>Improve NITC Employee Development Process</b>	Provide training to NITC personnel in the new technologies and management techniques needed to provide superior services to our customers.

# 1. Planning Objectives, Assumptions and Methodology

## Introduction

The purpose of the 1997 strategic planning effort was to review and update the National Information Technology Center's (NITC) Strategic Plan completed in late 1995.

## Objectives of the Plan

- To define the NITC vision (where we want to be in five years).
- To support the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Information Resources Management (IRM) mission and the goals of the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO).
- To ensure that all employees (including clerical, administrative, and operations) see how they contribute to the program objectives of the NITC, and to provide them with focus and direction. As a result, all major NITC activities will be reflected in strategic goals and initiatives.
- To help NITC obtain and maintain support from higher organizational levels.
- To make NITC planning information more accessible to employees.
- To provide a tool to assist managers in making decisions related to the budget, personnel, and marketing expenditures.
- To ensure that customers see themselves in the program objectives of the NITC.

## Assumptions

- The team will focus primarily on the planning process, and then on the physical presentation of the plan.
- The plan will build upon previous planning efforts, and will be updated to reflect organizational, environmental and other changes.
- The planning process and the plan itself will improve with each new version.



- The plan will be succinct, encouraging reading and understanding by a larger audience.
- To encourage ownership of the plan, as many employees as possible will be involved in its development.
- The tactical initiatives presented in support of the strategic objectives span FY97 through FY99.
- During our planning efforts, the team identified conceptual differences between those “business as usual” activities NITC staff does, and those activities which are undertaken to change the status quo. Those activities done continuously that constitute “business as usual” were labeled *core business functions*. On the other hand, discreet projects with definable beginning and ending dates that result in changes or enhancements, were labeled *tactical initiatives*.
- Clear linkage between the several tiers of the plan (presented as goals, strategic objectives, tactical initiatives, and performance measures) will be provided.
- The strategic and tactical plans will be published on the NITC web site in order to take maximum advantage of new information publication and dissemination technologies, reduce paperwork, and simplify updates.
- Resource needs stated for each strategic objective will describe only proposed increases, and will not include those resources already committed to that work.

### **Linkage to OCIO Annual Performance Plan**

The Office of the Chief Information Officer has six Critical Objectives for supporting the mission of USDA. The Critical Objectives are accomplished by OCIO Program Areas, which provide Core Business Functions. NITC is comprised of four Program Areas which support the following two OCIO Critical Objectives:

- Assuring that mission-critical information systems are Year 2000 compliant, and
- Promoting the delivery of information technology services.

A mapping of OCIO Program Areas and Core Business Functions to NITC organizational units is provided in Appendix 2, “The NITC Organization.”

## Methodology

The team used a classical planning approach, tailored to meet NITC needs and constraints.

- The team conducted a Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. This analysis, included in Appendix 4, defined the NITC business environment.
- Next, the team reviewed the strategic objectives defined in the FY 1996 - 2000 Strategic Plan, and the Tactical Initiatives defined in the 1997-98 Tactical Plan. Taking into account the considerable progress that had been made since the prior planning efforts were conducted (Appendix 3), and insights gained in the SWOT analysis, the team modified the strategic objectives, mapped the ongoing tactical initiatives to them, and proposed additional tactical initiatives.
- The team then invited all of the staff of the NITC to review and comment on the draft Strategic Objectives and Tactical Initiatives. The team e-mailed copies of the draft to all NITC employees, held an “Open House” in Kansas City and meetings in Fort Collins and Washington, D.C., and solicited comments. It is estimated that as many as 50 NITC employees in Washington, D.C., Fort Collins, and Kansas City participated. Dozens of thoughtful comments were received.
- Based on those comments, the team modified the strategic objectives and proposed tactical initiatives, and prepared a draft plan for review by the NITC Quality Steering Team (QST).
- Based on the comments of the QST, the team completed the plan, and published it as a Web document.

## 2. NITC Mission, Vision, and Goals

### Introduction

The National Information Technology Center is the operational arm of the USDA OCIO and supports the IRM Mission and Goals of the Department. That support is illustrated in Figure 1.

### Mission

NITC provides information management and other automated processing services, as well as research, development, testing, technical leadership, and consulting in the use of computer and communications technology to support and help accomplish the program and administrative missions of the Department and its agencies, and other users.

### Vision

NITC is a team committed to excellence in providing innovative leadership through reliable information technology services and solutions in support of our valued customers.

### Goals

1. Be a leading, innovative information technology services organization, experienced in providing quality and cost-effective services for centralized and distributed computing, applications support, and telecommunications service.
2. Be an effective partner to customers by understanding their business and information technology needs.
3. Broaden our customer base by aggressive marketing of services.
4. Be an organization where the contributions of its people are sought, recognized, and valued.



# NITC Support of the USDA IRM Mission

## USDA IRM Mission

To strategically acquire and use information technology resources to improve the quality, timeliness, and cost effectiveness of USDA service delivery to its customers.

**Goal I:** Ensure decisions regarding the selection and deployment of information technology are based on USDA business needs.

**Goal II:** Develop Department-wide information and technical infrastructure that will improve service delivery through more effective information systems and data management.

**Goal III:** Implement a professional development strategy to ensure USDA's staff possess the skills necessary to meet the challenges of effectively delivering programs and services with information technology.

**NITC Mission:**  
The USDA National Information Technology Center provides information management and other automated processing services, as well as research, development, testing, technical leadership and consulting in the use of computer and communications technology to support and help accomplish the program and administrative missions of the Department and its agencies, and other users as required.

**NITC Vision:**  
A team committed to excellence in providing innovative leadership through reliable information technology services and solutions in support of our valued customers.

### NITC Goals Objectives

**Goal 1**  
Be a leading, innovative information technology services organization, experienced in providing quality and cost-effective services for centralized and distributed computing, applications support, and telecommunications service.

**Goal 2**  
Be an effective partner to customers by understanding their business and information technology needs.

**Goal 3**  
Broaden our customer base by aggressive marketing of services.

**Goal 4**  
Be an organization where the contributions of the people are sought, recognized and valued.

Strategic Objective A: Support the USDA Information Systems Technology Architecture (ISTA)

Strategic Objective B: Market NITC

Strategic Objective C: Maximize Life and Performance of Legacy Environments

Strategic Objective D: Control and Reduce Costs

Strategic Objective E: Improve Customer Service Quality

Strategic Objective F: Develop New Services and Increase our Customer Base for Existing Services

Strategic Objective G: Prepare the Workforce to Meet Future Challenges

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# 3. Strategic Objectives

## Strategic Objective A: Support the USDA Information Systems Technology Architecture (ISTA)

This Strategic Objective supports the *USDA IRM Goal II*, and *NITC Goals 1, 2, and 3*.

The USDA ISTA is a blueprint for the USDA computing and telecommunications environment. The ISTA defines the current environment in USDA, but more importantly, defines the future environment to which the USDA plans to migrate. It has three primary components: The Business/Data Architecture, the Technical Standards Architecture (computing hardware and software), and the Telecommunications Architecture.

NITC has a significant role in the operation and maintenance of the existing USDA architecture, and is committed to providing an open environment that will facilitate the transition to the future environment. NITC will develop and offer the expertise necessary to assist the OCIO in migrating the USDA to the new architecture. Every organizational unit of NITC will play a key role in migrating from the current to the future Information Systems Technology Architecture.

### Core Business Functions:

#### OCIO Program 1: Computing Environment

Point of Contact: Chief, Technology Operations and Services  
Division, 816-823-1271

#### OCIO Program 3: Applications

Point of Contact: Chief, Agency Applications Services  
Division, 970-498-1510



### **Tactical Initiatives:**

- **\*\* *Provide Open Systems Computing Environment:*** Provide an Open Systems computing environment on the NITC mainframe by implementing the UNIX Services component of OS/390. Under UNIX Services, NITC customers can run UNIX and NT applications on the NITC mainframe. Doing this would allow them to lower their operating costs; reduce FTE support requirements; and take advantage of the superior NITC operating environment, which provides excellent physical security, sophisticated fire protection, 24x7 support, and superior backup and hot site services.
- **\*\* *Provide Web Access to NITC Computing Environment:*** Implement and market a service which will enable NITC customers to access NITC computing platforms through a Web Interface.

(\*\* Note: ***bold + italic*** indicates a link elsewhere in the document)

### **Measurements:**

- The number of times NITC was involved in the planning processes of the OCIO and/or our customers.
- The percent improvement in a satisfaction measurement with our customers.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Some increased staff, but most initiatives are ongoing.

## Strategic Objective B: Market NITC

This Strategic Objective supports \*\* *NITC Goals 1, 2, and 3.*

If NITC is to attract new customers and increase services to existing customers to compensate for projected declining demand from traditional sources, it should expand its existing marketing function. Continued and better focused and supported efforts might result in a larger customer base and, therefore, more stability for all NITC divisions, as well as reduced unit costs for our customers.

The formalized marketing function will include the development of a customer information database that will contain facts about our customer agencies such as their missions, goals, objectives, business processes, and information technology infrastructures. Additionally, the development of an employee skills database will provide information that can be used for business development efforts, as well as a tool to maximize investments in training and staffing. NITC will also continue to participate in government information technology trade shows to display and exhibit the types of services and products we offer.

### Core Business Functions:

OCIO Program 2: Customer Support

Point of Contact: Chief, Information Management and  
Customer Support Division, 816-926-2318

### Tactical Initiatives:

- \*\* *Define New Process for Business Development:* Define, document, and implement a process for developing, marketing, selling, and rolling out new NITC products and services (and existing services to new customers).
- \*\* *Update and Expand NITC Web Site:* Update and expand NITC web site, with emphasis on marketing and customer information service.

### Measurements:

- The percent increase in our budget due to new business requirements.
- The increased dollar amount billed as a result of new customers and/or new services.

### Resources Needed:

- Increased staffing and funding since most initiatives are new.

## **Strategic Objective C: Maximize the Performance of Legacy Environments**

This objective supports the \*\* *USDA IRM Goal II*, and *NITC Goals 1* and *3*.

NITC has a successful history of providing mainframe services (e.g., processing, facilities management, and security) to the USDA and other federal agencies. NITC must continue to maximize the return on USDA's investment by supporting the fundamental needs of existing clients, while moving toward the information technology architectures of the future.

This can be accomplished by modernizing and developing of legacy environments by:

- Maintaining an infrastructure to ensure maximum availability, reliability and performance
- Developing and supporting applications running in the legacy environments
- Accomplishing software performance reviews
- Supporting documentation requirements
- Reviewing legacy systems and platforms for modification and enhancement requirements.

### **Core Business Functions:**

OCIO Program 1: Computing Environment.

Point of Contact: Chief, Technology Operations and Services  
Division, 816-823-1271

OCIO Program 3: Applications

Point of Contact: Chief, Agency Applications Services  
Division, 970-498-1510

### **Tactical Initiatives:**

- **\*\* *Provide Open Systems Computing Environment:*** Provide an Open Systems computing environment on the NITC mainframe by implementing the UNIX Services component of OS/390. Under UNIX Services, NITC customers can run UNIX and NT applications on the NITC mainframe. Doing this will allow them to lower their operating costs; reduce FTE support requirements; and take advantage of the superior NITC operating environment, which provides excellent physical security, sophisticated fire protection, 24x7 support, and superior backup and hot site provisions.
- **\*\* *Provide Web Access to NITC Computing Environment:*** Develop strategy, implement and market a service which will enable NITC customers to access NITC computing platforms via a web interface.
- **\*\* *Ensure NITC Year 2000 Compliance:*** Ensure all NITC hardware and software (including, but not limited to, both USDA and FAA subsystems) are fully compliant and functional on January 1, 2000.
- **\*\* *Refine & Document Systems Development Life Cycle:*** Define and document the process by which NITC develops and integrates systems for USDA agencies and other Federal customers.

### **Measurements:**

- The improved ratio of compliant to non-compliant products and applications on all NITC platforms.
- The increased number of GUI and Web interfaces developed and implemented for NITC customers.
- The consistency of and/or improvement in mainframe availability, reliability and performance.
- Progress as tracked through the accomplishment of milestones in a formal project plan.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Should not require significant increase in resources since most of the proposed initiatives are on-going activities.

## Strategic Objective D: Control and Reduce Costs

This Strategic Objective supports the **\*\* USDA IRM Goal I and Goal II, and NITC Goals 1 and 2.**

To compete effectively with other public and private information services providers, NITC's management and operations decisions must be based on sound business analyses that will allow us to deliver high quality services at a low cost. In addition, the National Performance Review (NPR), the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), and the Information Technology Management Reform Act (ITMRA) mandate that NITC contain costs and continually improve service delivery. One strategy NITC will employ to meet these mandates will be to continue marketing its services. Our aim is to maximize the customer base over which our costs are spread, and thereby lower unit costs for all customers.

### Core Business Functions:

#### OCIO Program 2: Customer Support

Point of Contact: Chief, Information Management and Customer Support Division, 816-926-2318

#### OCIO Program 4: Administration

Point of Contact: Chief, Security and Analysis Staff, 816-926-2174

### Tactical Initiatives:

- **\*\* Develop NITC Resource Tracking System:** Develop NITC Resource Tracking System.
- **\*\* Refine & Document Systems Development Life Cycle:** Define and document the process by which NITC develops and integrates systems for USDA agencies and other Federal customers.
- **\*\* Define New Process for Business Development:** Develop, document, and implement a process for developing, marketing, selling, and rolling out new NITC products and services (and existing services to new customers).



**Measurements:**

- The percent of change in the amount of overhead added to hourly staff rates which determines service rates for the Agency Applications Services Division (AASD).
- The percent of change in the amount of overhead added to the base rates for mainframe services.
- The number of new business inquiries we have that specify cost-reduction as the reason for moving processing to the NITC.

## **Strategic Objective E: Improve Customer Service Quality**

This Strategic Objective supports \*\* *USDA IRM Goal II* and *NITC Goals 1 and 4*.

We must make our commitment to customers highly visible through an aggressive approach to problem resolution, improved technical communications, a centralized help desk (customer service center), and the development of good customer service skills. Those capabilities must be evident in all staff, including clerical, administrative, and operations personnel. Commitment to customer satisfaction makes it imperative that we fully understand the missions and goals of our customers so that we can satisfy their requirements - both current and future. We must deliver “Just in Time” services to our customers and provide the leadership necessary to help them make sound information technology investments. It is critical that NITC provide internal and external customers Continued and Never-ending Improvement (CANI).

### **Core Business Functions:**

#### Program 1: Computing Environment

Point of Contact: Chief, Technology Operations and Services  
Division  
816-823-1271

#### Program 2: Customer Support

Point of Contact: Chief, Information Management and Customer  
Support Division  
816-926-2318

#### Program 4: Administration

Point of Contact: Chief, Security and Analysis Staff  
816-926-2174

### **Tactical Initiatives:**

- **\*\* *Improve Customer Service Quality***: Establish an improved methodology for anticipating, determining and responding to current and potential customers' needs.
- **\*\* *Update and Expand NITC Web Site***: Update and expand NITC web site, with emphasis on marketing and customer information service.
- **\*\* *Refine & Document Systems Development Life Cycle***: Define and document the process by which NITC develops and integrates systems for USDA agencies and other Federal customers.

### **Measurements:**

- The decrease in the number of calls to the Customer Service Center.
- The improved calls-to-solution ratio for Customer Service Center calls.
- The number of new business referrals from existing customers.
- The number and type of participants in the NITC planning process.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Increased funding, and possibly increased staffing, would be required for new initiatives.

## **Strategic Objective F: Develop New Services and Increase Customer Base for Existing Services**

This objective supports \*\* *USDA IRM Goal II*, and *NITC Goals 1, 2, 3*.

To grow and remain viable, NITC must both anticipate and respond to the evolving needs of its customers and position itself to assist USDA agencies who are not currently customers, but could benefit from NITC services. Developing and offering new services, and identifying new customers by proposing solutions to their IT needs will expand our customer base.

One strategy NITC will employ is to continue to maximize opportunities for Federal agencies to transfer mainframe processing to NITC. Increasing the base over which costs are spread will lower unit costs for customers. Another strategy is to emphasize NITC's experienced technical staff which operates a 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, climate-controlled, secure facility with an excellent telecommunications network. As USDA agencies continue to experience resource reductions, they will be forced to shed "non-mission" functions. These agencies will then need to find alternative methods of hosting hardware and providing technical support for distributed systems. NITC can manage agency hardware platforms located at the Kansas City site, and can also provide personnel to perform remote site management for hardware platforms located at agency sites.

### **Core Business Functions:**

#### Program 2: Customer Support

Point of Contact: Chief, Information Management and Customer Support Division  
816-926-2318

### **Tactical Initiatives:**

- **\*\**Develop Applications Performance Tuning Service***: Develop and market a service which will help NITC customers improve the processing efficiency of their applications and databases, and reduce computing costs.
- **\*\**Provide Web Access to NITC Computing Environment***: Develop strategy, implement and market a service which will enable NITC customers to access NITC computing platforms via a web interface.
- **\*\**Refine & Document Systems Development Life Cycle***: Define and document the process by which NITC develops and integrates systems for USDA agencies and other Federal customers.

### **Measurements:**

- Increase in the percent of the budget dedicated to marketing.
- The number of types of NITC customers (e.g., mainframe, database development, facilities management).
- The number of products and services marketed.

### **Resources Needed:**

- Increased funding and staffing will be needed for new initiatives

## Strategic Objective G: Prepare the Workforce to Meet Future Challenges

This Strategic Objective supports \*\* *USDA IRM Goal III*, and *NITC Goal 1, Goal 2, and Goal 4*.

Each member of the NITC workforce must anticipate and prepare for the future. The organization must reflect the streamlining initiatives of the USDA, while meeting the requirements of technology that is changing at a furious pace. Each employee must understand how NITC fits into the “big picture,” and participate in a fundamental cultural shift. NITC staff must see themselves as solution providers, rather than as the utility providers they once were. NITC must satisfy its mission, which is to assist USDA agencies in meeting their mission objectives through the application of information technology.

NITC must increase its ability to respond to changes in business, in its customer base, and in technology, and to create the environment necessary to improve productivity and support new business initiatives. The NITC organization and work force must be dynamic, flexible and proactive in order to meet future challenges and respond to continuous, rapid change. Additionally, the development of an employee skills database will provide information that can be used for business development efforts, as well as a tool to maximize investments in training and staffing.

### Core Business Functions:

#### Program 2: Customer Support

Point of Contact: Chief, Information Management and Customer Support Division  
816-926-2318

#### Program 4: Administration

Point of Contact: Chief, Security and Analysis Staff  
816-926-2174

### Tactical Initiatives:

- \*\* *Improve NITC Employee Development Process*: Improve the process by which NITC business needs are identified, and then met by managing staffing levels and enhancing skill sets.

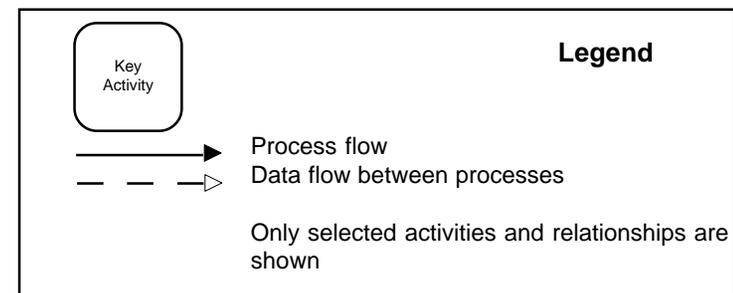
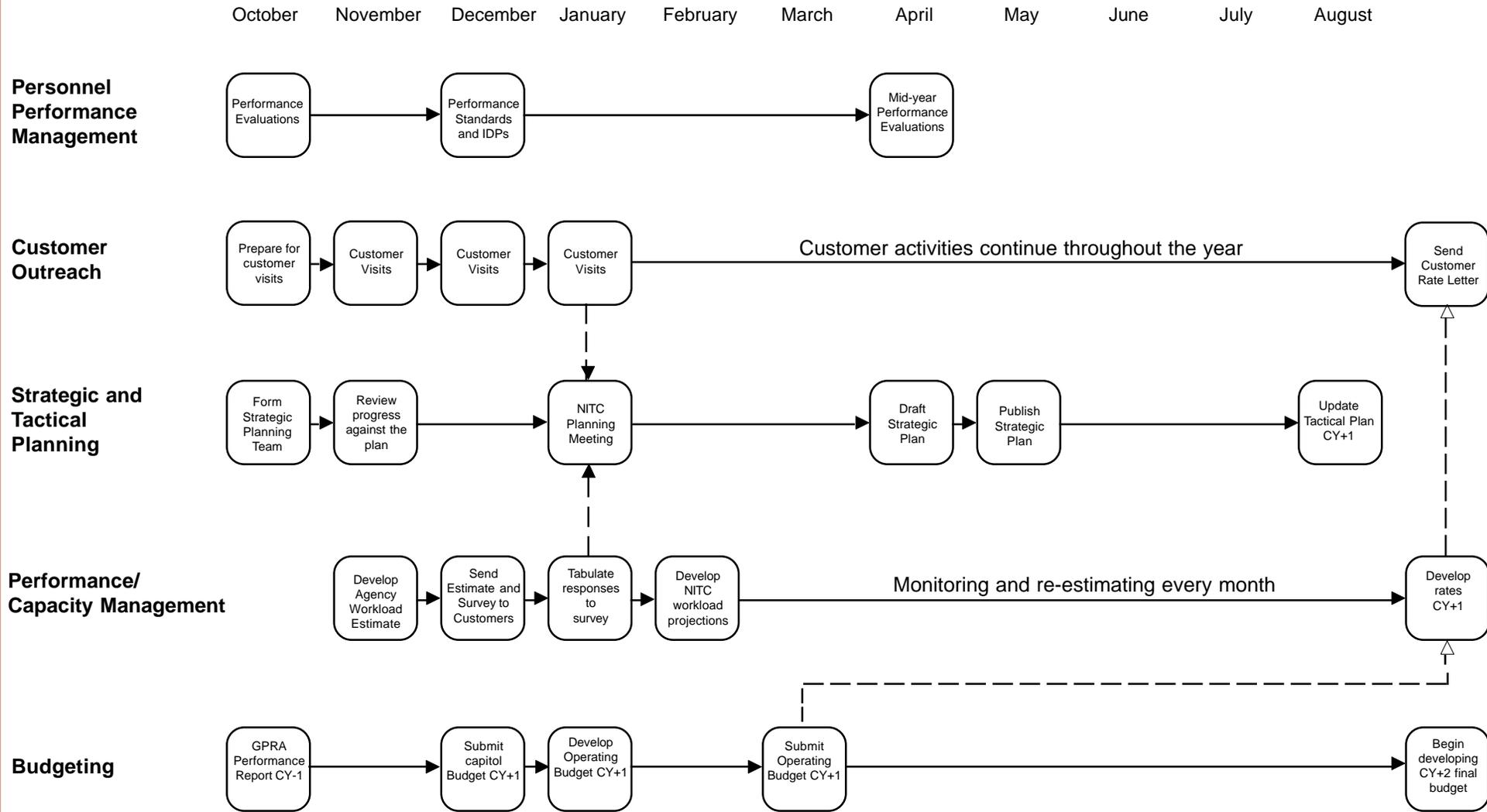
**Measurements:**

- The number of personnel with improved skills as a result of each initiative.
- The number of personnel who actively pursue and respond to the “value chain” concepts.
- The declining number of times NITC must respond to ad hoc information requests. (As opposed to simply delivering information that is available as a result of a planning process that is well institutionalized, and integrates well with other components such as budget, training, and upward reporting.)

**Resources Needed:**

- Expanded view of appropriate use of training budget.
- More innovative utilization of existing soft (non-technical) skills of staff.

# Appendix 1: NITC Planning Calendar



# Appendix 2: NITC Organization

NATIONAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CENTER

July 1998

## Office of the Director (Executive Leadership and OCIO Program 5: Y2K Readiness)

Point of Contact: USDA Associate Chief Information Officer, 816-926-6501

### Technology Operations & Services Division (OCIO Program 1: Computing Environment)

- Computer Operations Branch
- Storage Management Branch
- Telecommunications & Operating System Software Branch

#### Core Business Functions:

CBF 1.1: Systems Management: Mainframe, Client/Server.

CBF 1.2: Telecommunications: Hardware, Software.

CBF 1.3: Computer Operations: LAN/Office Automation, Systems Network Control Center, Tape Library, Production Control, Hardware Management, Facilities.

CBF 1.4: Storage Management: DASD, Contingency/Disaster Recovery.

Point of Contact: Chief, Technology Operations and Services Division  
816-823-1271

### Information Management and Customer Support Division (OCIO Program 2: Customer Service)

- Applications Software Branch
- Certification & Customer Support Branch
- Strategic Planning & Support Branch

#### Core Business Functions:

CBF 2.1: Customer Liaison.

CBF 2.2: Help Desk.

CBF 2.3 Change-Problem Management.

CBF 2.4: Systems Certification.

CBF 2.5: Define Software Requirements.

CBF 2.6: Outreach (Marketing).

CBF 2.7: IT Support for Production Control and Scheduling  
CBF 2.8: Information Systems Support for Financial Management.  
CBF 2.9: Documentation Management.  
CBF 2.10: Configuration Management.  
CBF 2.11: Database Management.  
CBF 2.12: Software Integration.  
CBF 2.13: Applications Software Management.  
CBF 2.14: Applications Tools Management.  
CBF 2.15: Transaction Processing.  
CBF 2.16: Electronic Commerce.  
CBF 2.17: Data Warehousing.  
CBF 2.18: Strategic Planning.  
CBF 2.19: Capacity Management.  
CBF 2.20: Performance Management.  
Capacity Management: Mainframe, Client/Server.  
Performance Management.

Point of Contact: Chief, Information Management and Customer  
Support Division, 816-926-2318

### **Agency Applications Services Division (OCIO Program 3: Applications)**

- Applications Development Branch
- Applications Maintenance and Support Branch

#### **Core Business Function:**

CBF 3.1: Applications Life Cycle Support

Point of Contact: Chief, Agency Applications Services Division, 970-498-1510

### **Security and Analysis Staff (OCIO Program 4: Administration)**

- Administration Team
- Financial and Management Services Team
- Security Team

#### **Core Business Functions:**

CBF 4.1: Administrative and Overhead Cost Review.

CBF 4.2: Develop/Maintain Facility, Personnel, and Computer Security

CBF 4.3: Provide Financial Management.

CBF 4.4: Provide Administrative Support.

Point of Contact: Chief, Security and Analysis Staff, 816-926-2174

# Appendix 3: 1997 Performance Evaluation

The NITC has made impressive progress toward accomplishing the Strategic Objectives in the NCC Strategic Plan: 1996 - 2000. A summary follows:

## 1996 Strategic Objective and 97-98 Tactical Plans that supported it.

## Progress Summary

**Note: Many tactical Plans support multiple Strategic Objectives**

<p>1. Maximize NITC's competitive position through containment and reduction of costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)</li> <li>• Administrative and Overhead Cost Reviews</li> <li>• Obtain Data Center Consolidation Business</li> <li>• USDA Electronic Mail Environment</li> </ul>	<p>NITC is a much more competitive organization than when the last Strategic Plan was written. Significant work was done on all tactical initiatives in FY97 except the "Administrative and Overhead Cost Reviews", which have been delayed until FY 98. NITC is implementing GPRA, and, has significantly improved the USDA e-mail environment, and is a potent competitor for data center consolidation business. Attainment of this new business holds promise for significantly reducing the NITC unit cost for mainframe support.</p>
<p>2. Achieve Federal "Super Center" status by increasing our customer base for existing services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve Interoperability</li> <li>• Marketing NITC Products and Services</li> <li>• Obtain Data Center Consolidation Business</li> </ul>	<p>NITC has begun building a marketing program and, as noted above, has identified and competed for significant new mainframe business. It has increased Interoperability by building the capabilities for mainframe Oracle customers to access an application via their Web browser. However, much remains to be done on all of these projects in the coming years.</p>
<p>3. Establish an open environment for USDA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve Interoperability</li> <li>• OS/390 Operating System</li> </ul>	<p>The increased Interoperability described above has helped to achieve an open environment for USDA; however, significant improvements can only be accomplished with the implementation of the OS/390 operating system. Work on the implementation of OS/390 is underway.</p>
<p>4. Expand services to maximize the performance of legacy environments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 2000 Compliance</li> </ul>	<p>NITC has planned and is making progress toward Year 2000 compliance. However, this work will continue for several years.</p>
<p>5. Enhance our image as an information service center committed to customer satisfaction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve Interoperability</li> <li>• Automated Records Management System (ARMS)</li> <li>• NITC Customer Support Center</li> </ul>	<p>As was described above, NITC has made significant strides toward increasing Interoperability, but still has much to do. The ARMS pilot was only partially successful; however, much was learned, and NAS has asked for more ARMS work in late FY97 and FY98. Two other initiatives provided unanticipated support for this objective: GPRA-related customer surveying allowed NITC to begin to establish a customer satisfaction baseline, and the Marketing effort gave NITC a potent tool for enhancing its image.</p>
<p>6. Aggressively pursue new service opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve Interoperability</li> <li>• Automated Records Management System (ARMS)</li> <li>• Marketing NITC Products and Services</li> <li>• Optimization and Concentration and Post FTS2000 Services</li> </ul>	<p>NITC has aggressively pursued new service opportunities. In the preliminary round of competition for the new FAA mainframe business, NITC was successful over some very capable competitors. Marketing efforts have identified several other mainframe business opportunities Either that FAA effort or several others may gain NITC new business in FY98. On the telecommunications side, NITC has undertaken much Optimization and Concentration work, and has reaped impressive cost savings for USDA. That record of success will help NITC as it competes for Post FTS2000 work.</p>
<p>7. Change the organization and improve the work force to meet the challenges of the future.</p>	<p>Of all FY 1996 - 2000 Strategic Objectives, only this one had no tactical plans associated with it. However, the reorganization, which was took place during the 1995 planning effort, dramatically changed the NITC organization. Still, as review comments made clear, not all aspects of the reorganization have been completely implemented, and some work remains to be done. In addition, more focused efforts to improve the work force need to be launched.</p>
<p>8. Exercise cost containment measures in telecommunications in USDA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost-effective Internet Access for USDA</li> <li>• Improve Management Control of Local Exchange Carriers</li> <li>• Optimization and Concentration and Post FTS2000 Services</li> </ul>	<p>NITC telecommunications services have been extraordinarily successful in cost containment. The USDA Internet Access Network has saved millions of dollars compared to what uncoordinated agency efforts would have cost. Telecommunications inventory and Business Process Reengineering efforts now underway promise to make possible even larger cost savings. The organization responsible for this goal is no longer part of the NITC.</p>

# Appendix 4: NITC Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

## Strengths

- Good image and reputation
- HW/SW infrastructure
- Our staff is our strength
  - program area knowledge
  - Wide range and depth of technical skills and experience
  - Expertise in many applications and with many customers
- Customer oriented
- One stop shopping for telecommunications
- Developing active marketing program

## Weaknesses

- Not poised organizationally as well as we should be to go after new business
- Employees are not hooked into our overall business strategy, and do not focus on all mission areas
- We do not have enough marketing information on our customers (their future plans, level of satisfaction)
- Not selling ourselves well enough (advertising, cost advantages of mainframes)
- We do not plan well enough
  - We are reactive, not proactive
  - Not enough time is spent on planning
- The pace and complexity of change causes problems
  - At mercy of laws that change our customers' missions
  - Do not have the resources to make needed changes
  - Employee turmoil due to change
  - Unclear lines of responsibility in some organizations

## Opportunities

- One stop shopping for all sources
  - Negotiate bulk discounts from telecom vendors
- Get new customers
  - Open systems
  - New Federal government organizations
- Sell new services
  - Open systems
  - LAN backup
  - Facilities Management
  - Year 2000 support to existing services
  - Provide support services for future
  - Enterprise Network Operations Center (ENOC)
  - Local exchange carrier (LEC) management services
  - Year 2000 - Make ourselves compliant and assist customers
- Fully Develop and support a marketing plan
- Reduce operations costs, including software
  - Be creative and aggressive

## Threats

- GSA is redefining how they do business. They could take over what we do.
- Internal competition (NITC).
- Not enough training dollars. Shrinking budget is the threat.
- Other Federal agencies that provide competing services.
- Software and labor costs are escalating.
- Private industry.
- Outsourcing the data center.
- Contractors.
- Escalating operating budget.
- Increasingly sophisticated computer skills of customer agency employees.
- Trend of reducing government staff.
- Legislation could cause us to lose a customer overnight.
- Will lose lots of experienced staff, corporate knowledge and expertise in the next few years.
- Old and inflexible billing and security procedures oriented to the mainframe.